

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Specification, the term "BB OES PLYFORM" is now capitalized. However, it is noted that the generic terminology "decking" is used in conjunction with the term.

Claims 2-24, 26, and 28-52 remain in this application. Claims 1, 12, 25 and 27 have been cancelled. Claims 30-52 are newly added.

Claim rejections 35 USC § 102(b)

Claims 1, 2, 4-9, 11, 24-27, and 29 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Harper, Jr. (USP No. 4,244,152).

Independent claims 1, 25 and 27 have been cancelled and as such, the rejection of these claims is now moot.

Independent claims 11, 24 and 26 have been amended. Support for these amendments is believed to be found in the application as originally filed. It is believed that Harper does not teach, let alone suggest, all of the limitations of these claims, as amended. As such, these claims are believed to patentably define over the cited reference.

Claims 2 and 4-9 now depend, directly or indirectly, from Claim 11, and Claim 29 depends from Claim 26. Claims that depend from allowable claims are themselves allowable, and as such, these claims are believed to patentably define over Harper for at least the reason noted above with regard to Claims 11 and 26.

Claims 13-20, 22 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Birkemeier et al. (USP No. 3,635,509).

Claim 13 has been amended now depends from Claim 12, which is allowable for at least the reason noted above. Claims 14-20 and Claim 22 also now depend, directly or indirectly, from Claim 11. Thus, Claims 13-20, 22 are believed to be allowable for at least the reason noted above with respect to Claim 11. The rejection of these claims in view of Birkemeier is now believed to be moot.

Claim rejections under 35 USC § 103(a)

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harper, Jr. in view of Strickland et al., (USP No. 5,711,665).

Claim 3 now depends from Claim 11. Therefore Claim 3 includes all of the recitations of Claim 11. Again, claims that depend from allowable claims are also allowable. As such,

the rejection of Claim 3 is now believed to be moot since Claim 3 is believed to be allowable for at least the reason noted above in support of Claim 11.

Claim 10 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harper, Jr., in view of Lewis (USP No. 748,962).

Claim 10 now depends from Claim 11, and therefore includes all the recitations of, Claim 11. Accordingly, the rejection of Claim 10 is now believed to be moot since Claim 10 is believed to be allowable for at least the reason noted above in support of Claim 11.

Claim 21 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Birkemeier et al., in view of Lewis.

Claim 21 now depends (indirectly) from Claim 12. Therefore, Claim 21 includes all of the recitations of Claim 12. Accordingly, the rejection of Claim 21 is now believed to be moot since Claim 21 is believed to be allowable for at least the reason noted above in support of Claim 12.

Claims 23 and 28 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harper, Jr.

Claim 23 has been amended, and support for the amendments is believed to be found in the application as originally filed. It is believed that Harper does not teach, let alone suggest, all of the recitations of Claim 23, as amended. As such, Claim 23 is believed to patentably define over the Harper, Jr.

Claim 28 depends from, and therefore includes all of the recitations of, Claim 26. As such, Claim 28 is believed to be allowable for at least the reason noted above in support of Claim 26.

Newly Added Claims

Claims 30-52 have been added and are believed patentably define the invention in clear and distinct terms. These claims have not been added for any prior art reason. These claims are believed to be supported by the application as originally filed, and thus, no new matter is believed to have been added.

Conclusion

The Applicants believe that this amendment, and the above comments, puts the application in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider the above amendment and then allow Claims 2-24, 26, and 28-52.

No extension is believed to be due for the filing of this Non-Compliant Amendment and Response. If any fee is due, it should be charged to Deposit Account No. 23-2053. Any required petition should be considered provisionally made.

Respectfully submitted,



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